

RECOGNIZING DOUGLAS McLAIN
FOR ACHIEVING THE RANK OF
EAGLE SCOUT

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 11, 2007

Mr. GRAVES. Madam Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Douglas McLain, a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 351, and in earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Douglas has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Douglas has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community.

Madam Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Douglas McLain for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout. I am honored to represent Douglas in the United States House of Representatives.

INTRODUCTION OF THE VETERANS
DISABILITY COMPENSATION
AUTOMATIC COLA ACT

HON. JOE KNOLLENBERG

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 11, 2007

Mr. KNOLLENBERG. Madam Speaker, today I am introducing an important piece of legislation that speaks to our commitment to our Nation's veterans.

In the 109th Congress, I introduced the Veterans Disability Compensation Automatic COLA Act. This legislation would automatically increase disability benefits for veterans, each year, by the Consumer Price Index. Today I am re-introducing this important legislation.

Currently, it takes a yearly act by Congress to ensure disabled veterans receive a cost-of-living adjustment (COLA). While we have done this every year for the past three decades we cannot guarantee that future Congresses will act as responsibly. Taking a chance on disabled veterans' benefits is a chance I am not willing to take.

My legislation would simply make the COLA for veterans with disability benefits automatic each year. Furthermore, this important legislation also has no budgetary impact. In fact, both Congress and the President assume the increase in their budgets.

Madam Speaker, Social Security and Medicare beneficiaries receive an automatic COLA and our disabled veterans deserve the same. Thank you.

IMPLEMENTING THE 9/11 COMMIS-
SION RECOMMENDATIONS ACT
OF 2007

SPEECH OF

HON. EARL POMEROY

OF NORTH DAKOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 9, 2007

Mr. POMEROY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 1. This bill takes an important long-overdue step to implement recommendations put forth by the 9/11 Commission. This bill improves interoperability, enhances cargo and overall port security, and strengthens U.S. efforts to reduce the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

I do recommend that implementation of this bill be undertaken in such a way as to ensure that our rural first responders do not receive less funding as a result of the redistribution of the homeland security grants in the legislation. First responders across the Nation must be equipped to readily deal with and react to security concerns in the United States. Therefore, I think it is critical that North Dakota's first responders continue to receive the funding that they need and deserve to do their job.

IMPLEMENTING THE 9/11 COMMIS-
SION RECOMMENDATIONS ACT
OF 2007

SPEECH OF

HON. K. MICHAEL CONAWAY

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 9, 2007

Mr. CONAWAY. Mr. Speaker, I wish to revise and extend my remarks with regard to the vote on H.R. 1—Implementing the 9/11 Commission Recommendations Act of 2007.

While I certainly support the goal of this legislation and believe it to be imperative that Congress continue to work with the Administration to ensure the safety and security of our Nation, I could not in good conscience vote in favor of the measure as it was presented. I agree there is still work to be done and it would benefit this Congress to discuss the continued implementation of the recommendations of the 9/11 Commission; however, I believe H.R. 1 contained some critical flaws that prevent it from being a solution to the security dilemmas that we face today.

First and foremost, I believe this legislation is fiscally irresponsible. Not only does it create new government spending without providing any offsets, it essentially provides a blank check for these unfunded mandates by authorizing "such sums as may be necessary" for an unspecified number of years. Providing effective and common sense security measures is essential; however we cannot do so at the expense of fiscal responsibility and subject our Nation to higher government spending and a greater Federal deficit.

Beyond being fiscally irresponsible, I had concerns about the manner in which this legislation was considered. Decisions on matters as grave and enduring as the security and safety of this Nation should not be undertaken

hastily or impulsively and should not subvert the normal legislative process. This legislation was not afforded the opportunity to traverse the regular order and be debated on, amended, or considered during the committee process. Further, as no amendments were allowed, it cannot be said that the proposal received a fair and open debate.

Further, the 9/11 Commission Recommendations Act contains a provision expressing the Sense of Congress that the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI) should be authorized by the United Nations. I believe it presents a dangerous situation to allow the UN control over such an important program which restricts the transfer of banned weapons and technology, given that the UN membership includes some of the nations responsible for the violations that PSI seeks to prevent.

Finally, I am opposed to the provision that extends collective bargaining guarantees to the employees of the Transportation Security Administration (TSA). It is important to remember this is an idea that was explored during the creation of the TSA as the Homeland Security Act of 2002 was considered and at that time, it was determined it was not in the best interest of the organization and its mission. Unionizing TSA employees would tie the hands of the agency and disallow it the flexibility to deploy its workforce and change the nature of employees' work and locations in response to national emergencies.

Again, I want to emphasize for the record that I recognize the critical and serious nature of the business of protecting and securing our Nation and its citizens. However, as previously explained, I could not in good conscience vote for legislation that I do not believe to be an effective or responsible means in which to address these important issues.

RECOGNIZING TYLER SANDOVAL
FOR ACHIEVING THE RANK OF
EAGLE SCOUT

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 11, 2007

Mr. GRAVES. Madam Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Tyler Sandoval, a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 495, and in earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Tyler has been very active with his troop, participating in many Scout activities. Over the many years Tyler has been involved with Scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community.

Madam Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Tyler Sandoval for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout. I am honored to represent Tyler in the United States House of Representatives.